

RFA No. 294-2007-005 – Technical and Vocational Education and Training Program

ANNEX 1 - Questions & Answers

I. TECHNICAL QUESTIONS

- Q.1 Can USAID address any implications there may be to the TVET project based on recent political developments and USG recognition of the Palestinian emergency government? Can the project work in cooperation with Palestinian ministries and government run TVET institutions?
- A.1 The TVET program shall target the private TVET institutions; members of the TVET League. Applicant may currently coordinate with the Palestinian Authority.
- Q.2 Will the project exclusively focus on members of the TVET league as the primary target or will it be open to government/ UNRWA institutions implementing Vocational education and training programs?
- A.2 The TVET program shall focus on the members of the TVET League only.
- Q.3 The RFA mentions the existence of more than 200 public and private sector TVET institutions throughout the WB and Gaza, and at the same time, seems to want us to focus our efforts on those which are members of the “League”. Could USAID clarify whether or not project focus should be exclusively on the membership of the League, or can we also consider working with some of the other private TVET organizations?
- A.3 The TVET program shall focus on the members of the TVET League only.
- Q.4 If the applicant decides to include an illustrative implementation plan, can this be included as an Annex?
- A.4 The Applicant should refrain from submitting an illustrative implementation plan as it is not required under the RFA.
- Q.5 Should illustrative program indicators be included in 1) section i. Technical Approach; 2) section v. Performance Management Plan, or 3) in an Annex? Since space is limited, shouldn't this information be presented only once in the entire technical application?
- A.5 Section: Technical Approach should include only a summary of the expected outcome for the particular component. Illustrative program indicators should be included under section “v. Performance Management Plan” (page 32 of the RFA document).

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- Q.6 Will recent political developments potentially affect the nature of the RFA (i.e. contact with the new emergency government) and in that light is USAID considering the possibility of extending the deadline to accommodate possible changes.
- A.6 Contact with the Palestinian Authority is now permitted (see Annex 2 – Mission Notice No. 2007-WBG-17). The closing date remains Tuesday, July 31, 2007, 4:00 PM Tel-Aviv Time.
- Q.7 I wanted to know if the grant opportunity was for overseas training or here in the US”.
- A.7 The TVET program targets private TVET institutions in the West Bank.
- Q.8 As it is mandated by USAID that the League of Palestinian Non-governmental Vocational Education and Training Organizations is integral to the implementation of TVET, it is assumed that letters of association are unnecessary and specific allocations of funding to League members will be determined in conjunction with USAID during program implementation. Please confirm.
- A.8 Letters of association are unnecessary and specific funding allocations to the League members shall be determined in conjunction with USAID during program implementation.
- Q.9 Page 33 of the RFA references an Annex on Sub-recipients/partners. Does this mean a separate section outside of what will be included on Sub-recipients/Partners in the technical approach?
- A.9 Yes, the Annex on Sub-recipients/partners is to be a separate section. Under this Annex, the Applicant shall elaborate and provide information on the technical resources and expertise of the proposed organizations mentioned under section iv. Institutional Capacity and Past Performance of the Technical Application.
- Q.10 On page 33, USAID is requesting three references with contact information for each key personnel. It is also requesting three references of professional contacts with complete contact information. So, is USAID requesting 6 references? What is the definition of “professional contacts”?
- A.10 Only three (3) references of professional contacts are required for each proposed key personnel. For the purpose for this RFA, “Professional contacts” include professional supervisors or colleagues who are familiar with the performance of the proposed key personnel.
- Q.11 The RFP mentions that current US policy does not allow contact with the Palestinian Authority, however given recent changes in U.S. policy, are implementers now permitted to work with the government?

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- A.11 The No-Contact policy with the Palestinian Authority has now been lifted (see Annex 2 – Mission Notice No. 2007-WBG-17)).
- Q.12 By “private” TVET institutions, is USAID primarily interested in capacity building for members of the League and other NGO TVET institutions, or can we assume a broader definition that also includes for-profit TVET schools?
- A.12 The TVET program should target the TVET League members only, including the for-profit members of the League.
- Q.13 On June 20, 2007, the US Office of Foreign Assets Control issued "General License No. 7" deeming "[t]ransactions with the Palestinian Authority authorized." (Please see <http://www.treas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/programs/terror/gls/gl7.pdf>.) Given this development, will TVET implementing partners be expected to coordinate their activities with the MOEHE?
- A.13 Applicants are currently permitted to coordinate with the concerned PA Ministry.
- Q.14 Would there be restrictions on coordinating with government?
- A.14 Applicants are currently permitted to coordinate with the concerned PA Ministry.
- Q.15 Given the difficulty of access to Gaza, would USAID consider the position of the key position of Gaza Program Assistant to be that of an “assistant” or a more senior level “manager” who can function independently?
- A.15 As the TVET program will be implemented in the West Bank only, the Gaza Program Assistant key position is no longer required.
- Q.16 Is the 10% Cost Share referenced on p. 22 of the RFA to be understood as 10% of the USAID funding level (\$8 million) or 10% of the total value of the program (USAID Funding + Cost Share = Total Value of Program)?
- A.16 The referenced Cost Share shall represent 10% (percent) of the total USAID funding level (\$8 Million).
- Q.17 Does USAID have a complete a labor market assessment? If so, can it be provided? If not, does it plan to undertake a comprehensive labor market assessment?
- A.17 USAID does not have a completed labor market assessment and it is not considering conducting one under the TVET program.
- Q.18 On page 32, in the Institutional Capacity and Past Performance requirements for partner organizations, the RFA lists proposed field management structure and financial controls [point(g)] and home office backstopping and its purpose [point (h)]. These two items

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seem more appropriate to include in the management plan rather than in the institutional capacity section. May bidders address these two points in the management plan of their proposal?

A.18 Applicants shall include proposed field management structure and financial controls and home office backstopping and its purpose in section iii. Management Plan.

Q.19 As the situation on the ground changes vis-à-vis contact with the Government (USAID latest notice allows it) will the language of the RFA be changed to reflect allowing contact with the government? If so, what will be the level of coordination? Will the MoEHE and MoL need to endorse the program strategy and activities etc?

A.19 Applicants are currently permitted to coordinate with the Palestinian Authority at any level. Applicants will not need to seek endorsement on the program strategy and activities from the MoEHE or MoL.

Q.20 Based on above, will this program continue to focus only on training provided by NGOs? Will the scope be revised to focus on government institutions which provide vocational and technical education?

A.20 The TVET program should target the TVET League members only.

Q.21 Page 14 in RFA, line 7 states as one of the illustrative tasks that the activity will “develop, implement or build upon an existing model... in the *targeted governmental colleges*? Please clarify if this is a mistake given the scopes emphasis on providing support to NGOs.

A.21 This is a mistake; the TVET program should target the non-governmental institutions, which are members of the TVET League.

Q.22 If Prime wants to partner with a Palestinian institution, is it required that institution is pre-vetted by USAID or can that process be initiated following award to the successful bidder and prior to any sub-agreements with Palestinian organizations?

A.22 The Prime may propose to partner with any Palestinian institution. Vetting will be initiated following the selection of the successful bidder and prior to the awarding. Award to the Apparently Successful Applicant will be subject to proper vetting of all proposed Non-U.S. organizations under the prime.

Q.23 In Section H, c. Technical Application, paragraph 2 (page 29) it states that: “Applicants are required to accompany their Technical Application with a summary budget overview which depicts the distribution of the proposed budget across the program and activities as outlined in this RFA, the contribution of costs to the achievement of the Applicant’s proposed program and the expected program achievements stated herein. This

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presentation is limited to two (2) pages and to be incorporated in the annex to the Technical approach.

- A.23 The required Summary Budget should depict the percentage of program resources allocated to each component. No actual cost figures should be included. Allocations should contribute to the most efficient means for achieving program goals.
- Q.24 In light of the recent political changes, will organizations be allowed to work with the Palestinian Authority, including the Ministry of Education, local officials, and government run schools in the West Bank?
- A.24 Applicants are currently permitted to coordinate with the concerned PA Ministry.
- Q.25 The RFA indicates that the program should include activities in Gaza. In light of the recent political changes should organizations continue to include that geographic area in their proposals?
- A.25 Applicants should **not** include Gaza in their applications.
- Q.26 The RFA indicates that program activities that could be implemented include upgrading TVET institutions' facilities. Can USAID give us any guidance on what portion of the funds available under the award would be expected to be allocated to these activities?
- A.26 Applicants should propose a Summary Budget that depicts the distribution of the proposed budget across the program and activities. Allocations should contribute to the most efficient means for achieving program goals.
- Q.27 The instructions for the Technical Application USAID request a summary budget overview which depicts the distribution of the proposed budget across the program and activities as outlined in the RFA. The instructions for the cost application do not seem to indicate that the budget be presented by program/activity. Can USAID confirm that a programmatic budget is not required for the cost application?"
- A.27 The required Summary Budget should depict the percentage of program resources allocated to each component. No actual cost figures should be included. Allocations should contribute to the most efficient means for achieving program goals. A programmatic summary budget is not necessary in the cost application.

II. COST AND GENARAL QUESTIONS

- Q.1 The RFA states that www.grants.gov may be used to upload applications, but that hard copies are still required. Is electronic submission through www.grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov/>) a requirement or is it simply encouraged in addition to hard copies?

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- A.1 As stated in the RFA, “Applicants may upload applications to www.grants.gov; however, **hard copy submissions are still required**”. In other words, electronic submission through www.grants.gov is optional.
- Q.2 May bidder submit their proposals by the proposal deadline electronically through www.grants.gov in order to meet the deadline, with hard copies to follow shortly thereafter?
- A.2 No. Hard copies are required to be received by the RFA closing date, July 31, 2007, 16:00, Tel-Aviv Time
- Q.3 Is the CPR short form the preferred format for providing USAID with the past performance information requested on page 33?
- A.3 Applicants may submit past performance information in the format they elect to. There is “no preferred format” required. However, Applicants are required to provide all the requested information regarding past performance as detailed in the RFA.
- Q.4 USAID requests an electronic copy in Microsoft Word 2000 and Excel 2000. Does the Mission have software that would be compliant with more recent versions of Word and Excel?
- A.4 Yes. Electronic copies may be submitted in Microsoft Word 2003 and Excel 2003 versions.
- Q.5 Could we please request a current FSN Salary Scale for West Bank and Gaza?
- A.5 Applicants are expected to conduct their own market research for determining the salary scale for locally hired positions.